

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 12264

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM IR

SUBJ: HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN--SHAH'S VIEWS; NEW AMNESTY

1. IN MESSAGE READ BY SPECIAL BUREAU CHIEF NOSRATOLLAH MOINIAN AT CEREMONIES MARKING 28TH ANNIVERSARY OF UN HUMAN RIGHTS DECLARATION, SHAH PRAISED WORLD PROGRESS TOWARD HUMAN RIGHTS AND NOTED ADVANCEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN HAS PROCEEDED IN A QUIET ATMOSPHERE FREE FROM "VIOLENCE, REPRESSION, AND INHUMAN BEHAVIOR." SHAH SAID HUMAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN IRAN FULLY COMPATIBLE WITH IRAN'S CULTURAL HERITAGE WHICH RESERVED HIGHLY ELEVATED PLACE FOR INDIVIDUALS.

2. SHAH NOTED CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE THROUGHOUT WORLD, BUT THAT CONTINUED PRESENCE OF COLONIALISM, RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, FOOD SHORTAGES AND SIMILAR TROUBLES PROVED THERE STILL MUCH MORE TO BE DONE. PRINCESS ASHRAF, SHAH'S TWIN SISTER AND CHAIRMAN OF IRANIAN COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS SPOKE IN SIMILAR VEIN, AND NEW JUSTICE MINISTER KIANPOUR NOTED THAT 17 PRINCIPLES OF SHAH-PEOPLE REVOLUTION HAD FOSTERED RIGHTS INCLUDED IN UN DECLARATION.

3. COMMENT: FACT SHAH HIMSELF COMMENTED ON HUMAN RIGHTS DECLARATION PROBABLY MORE IMPORTANT THAN REEMPHASIS OF HIS VIEWS ON SUBJECT. SHOULD BE NOTED THAT SHAH'S AND GOI'S VIEWS OF HUMAN RIGHTS PLACE EQUAL OR GREATER STRESS ON PROTECTING GOOD CITIZENS FROM MISCREANTS THAN ON SCRUPULOUS

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OBSERVANCE OF WESTERN CONCEPTS OF RIGHTS OF ACCUSED,

PARTICULARLY IN NATIONAL SECURITY CASES. INDICATIONS FROM SEVERAL SOURCES SHOW IRANIANS CONCERNED THAT BETTER ASPECTS OF THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD (VOTING, WOMEN'S RIGHTS, LITERACY DEVELOPMENT, EXPANSION OF HEALTH TREATMENT, FLEXIBLE CIVIL LEGAL SYSTEM) NOT ALWAYS EMPHASIZED IN RECENT DISCUSSIONS ABROAD. ATTENTION GIVEN TO HUMAN RIGHTS DECLARATION OBSERVANCE HERE PROBABLY REPRESENTS AT LEAST BEGINNING OF ATTEMPT TO REDRESS BALANCE IN PUBLIC DISCOURT.

4. IN SEPARATE UNREELATED DEVELOPMENT OVER PAST 10 DAYS GOI HAS ANNOUNCED AS PART OF PAHLAVI DYNASTY 50TH ANNIVERSARY AMNESTY FOR 282 PRISONERS TRIED BY MILITARY COURTS, AND 1339 PRISONERS CONVICTED IN CIVIL COURTS. BULK OF CIVIL PRISONERS DOING TIME FOR MINOR CRIMES, ACCORDING TO MIN-. JUSTICE SOURCES. WHILE MILITARY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE VERY CLOSEMOUTHED, EMB HAD LEARNED INFORMALLY THAT OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THOSE AMNESTIED FROM MILITARY SIDE WERE MILITARY MEN CONVICTED OF VARIOUS OFFENSES AGAINST MILITARY LAW, PLUS A FEW SMUGGLERS. SOURCES COULD NOT (OR DID NOT) SAY WHETHER ANY NATIONAL SECURITY PRISONERS WERE RELEASED, THOUGH ONE DID SAY LIKELIHOOD WAS HIGH THAT "A FEW" WERE SET FREE.
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